PEDICURE SANDALS

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to footwear in general and in particular to sandals which may be used, for example, as a pedicure aid.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Whilst giving a pedicure, a beautician may wish to apply nail polish to the toenails. To assist in this, toe dividers are known which may be inserted between the toes to separate the toes so as to facilitate application of the nail polish and also prevent toes accidentally coming into contact with freshly applied polish.

It has been proposed to incorporate such toe dividers in a sandal so that a person receiving a pedicure may walk around in comfort after the pedicure, but without damaging the nail polish. Examples of such proposals are shown in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,870,837, 5,946,823 and 4,017,987.

Whilst such devices may be effective in preventing damage to a pedicure, they are all somewhat complicated in construction. Accordingly what is needed is a pedicure sandal which is simple to manufacture and easy to use.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the invention to provide a pedicure sandal which is easy to manufacture and which is easy to use and which can still provide effective separation of the toes and allow a user to walk around in comfort after a pedicure.

According to the invention there is provided a pedicure sandal comprising: a sole and toe dividing means defined within said sole wherein said toe dividing means are capable of being moved out of the sole for engagement between the toes of a user, whilst still being attached to the sole.

In accordance with the invention toe dividing means are provided in the sole and can be moved out of the sole for engagement between the toes of a user whilst still being attached to the sole. This affords a very simple yet effective sandal construction.

Preferably the sandal is a one-piece construction with the toe dividing means and the sole being formed of the same piece of material. This considerably simplifies construction.

Preferably the sole is generally planar and it is most preferably of a flexible material so as to permit easy movement by a user. Furthermore, the sole is preferably of a cushion material such as foam, sponge rubber or the like so as to cushion the foot and make the sandal comfortable to wear.

Preferably the toe dividing means is defined by one or more lines of weakness provided in the sole, for example perforations or cuts provided in the sole. Preferably the perforations, cuts or the like extend completely through the sole, so that the toe dividing means extends for the full thickness of the sole. This will allow the toe dividing means easily to be pushed out of the sole for engagement with the toes of a user. The cuts defining the toe dividing means may be continuous or intermittent.

As stated above, the toe dividing means is attached to the sole when deployed in use. In the preferred embodiment, the toe dividing means is hingedly connected to the sole by suitable hinge means, although a hinged connection is not essential.

Most preferably, such hinge means are formed by a section of the sole material itself, at the base of the toe dividing means. Preferably, the thickness of the material of the sole is locally reduced to form the hinge, for example by a forming a cut which extends only partially through the thickness of the sole, so as to facilitate hinging of the toe dividing means. Alternatively the hinge may be formed by creasing the sole material in the appropriate position, for example by crimping under heat and pressure.

The toe dividing means could comprise a number of discrete dividers, each individual divider being for placement between adjacent toes. Preferably, however, the toe dividing means comprises a unitary body comprising a plurality of formations for inserting between the toes. This is advantageous in that it allows the toe dividing means to be moved out of the sole in a single action, thereby facilitating use of the sandal.

In addition to the toe dividing means, the sandal may also be provided with a strap for helping secure the sandal on a user's foot.

Preferably such strap means are also defined in the sole so that they can be moved out of the sole for engagement with the user's foot. Again the strap means may be defined by lines of weakness such as perforations or cut lines in the sole.

Preferably the strap is defined in a peripheral region around the rear of the sandal. Preferably the strap is positioned such that it may be positioned around the mid-region of the foot, i.e. a user may place their foot through the strap after it has been released from the sole. However, other arrangements are possible. For example the strap means may be configured and arranged such that they may engage over the heel of the foot. In such a case, the hinge line of the strap may be defined more towards the rear of the sandal.

The strap may be configured so as to be variable in length. For example, the strap may be secured to the sole at different points along its length by bridges of material which can be broken as necessary to release an appropriate length of strap material.

Other objects and advantages of this invention will become apparent from the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings which show, by way of illustration and example only, a preferred embodiment of this invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a top view of a sandal in accordance with the invention;

FIG. 2 is a sectional view along the line 2—2 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 2A is a view corresponding to FIG. 2 showing an alternative hinge construction; and

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the sandal of FIG. 1 in an operative configuration.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring now to the Figures, a pedicure sandal 2 comprises a sole 4 made from a flexible cushion material such as foam or sponge rubber. The sole 4 is generally planar and is generally foot-shaped to receive a user's foot. The sole material is typically between 5 and 10 mm thick.

The front region 6 of the sole is provided with a toe dividing member 8. The toe dividing member 8 is defined in the sole by a line of weakness such as a cut 10 which preferably extends through the entire thickness of the sole. The toe dividing member 8 is, further, attached to the sole along a hinge line 12.